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Outcome of the first review of the implementation of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia

1. On 16 November 2010, the Government of Liberia and the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission adopted the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia (see PBC/4/LBR/2) to accompany Liberia's peacebuilding efforts. The agreed priorities were strengthening the rule of law, supporting security sector reform and promoting national reconciliation. The Commission also agreed to jointly review the statement of mutual commitments nine months after its adoption.

2. On 6 September 2011, the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs of the Government of Liberia, Amara Konneh, briefed the Liberia configuration on the Government's efforts regarding the first review of the statement of mutual commitments. Following endorsement by the Joint Steering Committee in Liberia, the Government submitted its progress report to the Commission; on 9 September 2011, the report was disseminated to members of the Liberia configuration.

3. Following receipt of the Government's progress report, members of the Liberia configuration submitted inputs on their efforts in support of the Commission's commitments. Drawing on the Government's progress report, the inputs of the members of the Liberia configuration, the Peacebuilding Commission mission reports and relevant studies, a review was prepared on progress in the implementation of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia from November 2010 to July 2011. The report analysed the achievements in the three priority areas in relation to the overall efforts for peace consolidation and in preparation for the transition of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The report concluded that the essence of the commitments agreed upon in the statement of mutual commitments remained valid but proposed some adjustments for the document to be more reflective of progress and challenges. The report also recommended new deliverable targets for each commitment as the basis upon which to measure progress for the second review of the statement of mutual commitments and proposed that the review period be extended from nine to twelve months.

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4. This first review of the statement of mutual commitments coincides with the successful completion of the holding of the second presidential elections since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement more than eight years ago. With the inauguration of the incumbent President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the country is preparing a revision of its second poverty reduction strategy paper in the context of undertaking a national visioning exercise designed to set the country on a long-term trajectory towards becoming a middle-income country by 2030. The present document draws on the recommendations of the review report with amendments to the commitment section of the statement of mutual commitments accordingly.

5. The Peacebuilding Commission recognizes that the primary responsibility for peace consolidation and development rests with the Government and people of Liberia. The revised commitments of each party are detailed below along with deliverable targets that will guide the second review of the statement of mutual commitments in August 2012.

A. Commitments by the Government of Liberia

The Government of Liberia commits to pursuing the following actions in the three main priority areas:

1. Strengthening the rule of law

(a) Prioritize the political will to facilitate the work of the Law Reform Commission and the Land Commission to better enable them to realize their mandates

Land and Law Reform Commission rolling deliverable targets:

- Alternative dispute system is piloted
- Public land bill is drafted in time for national consultations
- A first draft national law reform policy is prepared
- Progress is made towards the results/outputs included in the strategy of the Law Reform Commission
- A national conference on judicial reform is held.

(b) Increase budgetary allocations for the justice sector

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Budgetary increases in line with the recommendations of the United Nations and World Bank joint justice and security expenditure review are made
- Results of the review are publicized.

(c) Take immediate steps to reduce the unacceptable levels of pretrial detention cases

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Decrease in the number of pretrial detention cases
- Jury bill is enacted
- Increase in the number of justice officials trained
- Increase in the number of cases being addressed by the pilot probation system.

(d) Strengthen human resources management to ensure that justice sector staff with appropriate training and an accurate understanding of the law are deployed in the counties keeping pace with the deployment of the Liberian National Police

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Newly graduated magistrate judges are deployed
- Increase in recruitment and deployment of State prosecutors and public defenders
- Assignment of judges is reflective of the number of cases on the docket
- Legal services facility based at the hub is established.

(e) Create space for public dialogue on the rule of law and rule of law issues

Rolling deliverable targets (complementary to those proposed under the Law Reform Commission in the first commitment):

- Follow-up on the recommendations of the 2010 national conference on harmonizing the traditional and statutory legal systems is conducted
- Public outreach on rights and responsibilities is initiated.

(f) Create and implement a case management and tracking system while simultaneously fostering professional relationships among all components of the justice system, including the Liberian National Police

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Record-keeping and case management system is established and piloted in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties
- Record-keeping and case management system pilot is extended to the counties covered by the second and third regional justice and security hubs.

(g) Establish effective oversight mechanisms for the justice system that provide guarantees for judicial independence and public accountability

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Public Service Office is established at the hub(s)
- A review of accountability and oversight mechanisms is undertaken by justice and security sector institutions and recommendations are implemented
- An independent civilian oversight body for justice officials is established following consultations with the general public on its mandate
- Review of provisions and practices on court fees and fines is completed
- Review of bail scheme is completed
- Judicial legislative committee meetings are convened regularly
- Policy on a Liberian paralegal programme is developed by the Task Force on Non-Lawyers or other appropriate body.

2. Supporting security sector reform

(a) Maintain the political will to implement the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act

Rolling deliverable targets:

- The National Security Council meets regularly
- County Security Councils are functioning in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Gee and Sinoe
- Representation and active participation of women is realized at every level of security policymaking
- Police Act is prepared
- Reform of the Drug Enforcement Agency is initiated
- Public is engaged in dialogue on the contents of the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act.

(b) Increase budgetary allocations for institutions central to security and the rule of law, including the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberian National Police, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Budgetary increases in line with the recommendations of the United Nations and World Bank justice and security expenditure review are made
- Results of the expenditure review are publicized.

(c) Support the establishment and ongoing maintenance of five regional hubs

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Processing of land deeds for the regional hubs is completed
- A Public Support Office is functioning in the hubs with protected means for citizens to file complaints
- 70 per cent deployment of Liberian National Police, Corrections and Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization officials to the hubs, with 20 per cent female representation, is achieved
- Command and control plans for the Liberian National Police, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation are implemented
- Mechanisms are established to measure the effectiveness of the hubs
- Integrated communication networks for the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the Liberian National Police are established
- Legislative and regulatory framework is amended to support deconcentration within the justice and security sectors.

(d) Advance the reform of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in line with its strategic plan while maintaining progress in reforming the Liberian National Police

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Training opportunities for the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the Liberian National Police are increased
- Structural reform of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization is initiated.

(e) Advance efforts to establish effective civilian oversight mechanisms for national security institutions, in particular empowering the National Security Council, County Security Councils and relevant oversight bodies in the Legislature

Rolling deliverable targets:

- A review of the existing civilian accountability and oversight mechanisms for national security institutions is conducted
- Recommendations of the UNMIL/Department of Peacekeeping Operations study on accountability and oversight mechanisms for national security institutions are implemented
- Community policing focal points are designated in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Gee and Sinoe
- Ministry of Defence strategic plan is finalized
- A review of the overarching strategy to operationalize civilian oversight mechanisms is conducted.

(f) Continue engagement in initiatives pursued by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Engagement with ECOWAS and other countries in the subregion on the management of the Transnational Crime Unit is continued
- The Legislature is deliberating on the Fire Arms Control Act
- Progress is realized towards establishing the Small Arms Commission
- Efforts are being made to fully staff the Transnational Crime Unit.

3. Promoting national reconciliation

(a) Increase the holding of inclusive dialogue on national reconciliation, including on the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and land issues

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Timely submission of Government reports in accordance with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act is achieved
- Inclusive dialogue on national reconciliation is being held
- Strategy on national reconciliation is finalized and implemented.

(b) Generate the political will necessary for the Independent National Commission on Human Rights to fulfil its mandate

Rolling deliverable targets:

- The mandate of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights in relation to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is clarified
- The workplan for the Independent National Commission on Human Rights is implemented.

(c) Explore the creation of a pilot national youth service initiative

Rolling deliverable target:

- National youth service programme for peace and development is implemented.

B. Commitments by the Peacebuilding Commission

The support of the Peacebuilding Commission to Liberia's national peacebuilding effort will include political advocacy and support, resource mobilization and fostering coordinated action among all relevant stakeholders. Engagement by the Commission will help to consolidate the country's peacebuilding efforts, strengthen the Government's capacity to gradually assume the many critical functions that the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations country team are currently performing in security sector reform and the rule of law, and advance national reconciliation.

The Peacebuilding Commission is committed to the following actions:

(a) Mobilize resources for the peacebuilding priorities identified in the statement of mutual commitments and the Liberia peacebuilding programme, advocating for pledges and commitments made by different donors to be honoured and effectively coordinated; this will be carried out in coordination with Liberian officials

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Government and intergovernmental actors from traditional donor countries are approached
- Foundations from which funding for Liberia could be sought are contacted
- Follow-up discussions on Liberia are arranged with the African Development Bank.

(b) Broaden the donor base for Liberia and encourage the wide participation of partners in all international forums in which support can be garnered for Liberia; this will be carried out in coordination with Liberian officials

Rolling deliverable targets:

- The Commission liaises with multinational corporations working in Liberia in order to identify prospects for fund-raising

- States holding stakes in multinational corporations operating in Liberia are approached
- In kind resources from States in the region are sought.

(c) Generate sustained attention and undertake measures to advocate within the international community for support to the peacebuilding process by highlighting progress, challenges, risks and opportunities relating to peacebuilding efforts in the country

Rolling deliverable target:

- Talks are held at various events (including at the Council on Foreign Relations, United Nations governing boards, round tables and universities) to advocate on behalf of Liberia, in coordination with Liberian officials.

(d) Work with regional actors, particularly ECOWAS, to build upon their interventions in building durable peace in Liberia and in the subregion

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Means for ECOWAS to contribute to the deliberations of the Peacebuilding Commission are identified
- Coordination efforts with the other Peacebuilding Commission configurations in West Africa, in consultation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, ECOWAS, the Department of Political Affairs, INTERPOL and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are continued.

(e) Advise the Government of Liberia and the Liberian people on lessons learned, particularly with respect to land tenure and rights, the harmonization of traditional and statutory legal systems and reconciliation from experience gained in similar situations, serving as an objective voice and wielding, as merited, political leverage to keep related processes on track

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Continue partnering with experts in the fields of national reconciliation, transitional justice, rule of law and security sector reform
- Share comparative practices on war crime prosecution, repatriations, memorials, historical documentation and national symbols with the Government of Liberia and the Liberian population via meetings and reports as well as different forms of public outreach, including press releases, radio interviews and so forth.

(f) Contribute to deliberations on Liberia, in particular in the Security Council, by providing advice on the three peacebuilding priorities in order to ensure a responsible transition on security management from UNMIL to the Government of Liberia

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Share analytical mission reports with the Security Council
- Brief the Security Council during its biannual meetings on Liberia

- Meet regularly with the Assistant Secretaries-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations
- Contribute to the 2012 United Nations technical assessment mission.

(g) Contribute, individually and collectively, to supporting Liberia in its peacebuilding efforts by collaborating closely with UNMIL and the United Nations country team and encouraging the effective coordination of the United Nations, international organizations and donors at the country, Headquarters and capital levels

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Participation in meetings of the Integrated Mission Task Force for Liberia at the level of principals
- Engagement of interested actors, including academia, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and experts, through, inter alia, inputs to documents and participation in meetings
- Provide assessments of coordination and donors at the country, Headquarters and capital levels.

(h) Monitor the preparation and implementation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme with a view to ensuring that the peacebuilding priorities outlined in the statement of mutual commitments are effectively addressed

Rolling deliverable targets:

- Invite the Joint Steering Committee and other partners to join configuration or steering group meetings via video teleconferencing
- Review reports on the implementation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme submitted by the Joint Steering Committee
- Visit project sites and meet with implementing partners during field trips.

C. Periodic review of engagement

The Peacebuilding Commission and the Government of Liberia agree to undertake the second review of the statement of mutual commitments within 12 months of the submission of the Government's next progress report in August 2012.

The periodic review in August 2012 will be based on the deliverable targets set forth in the present document.

The Joint Steering Committee in Liberia will ensure that peacebuilding matters, and particularly urgent political issues, are placed on its agenda for consultation between the Government of Liberia and its partners, including the Peacebuilding Commission.